

for years made a special study of the Broad-wing and his accounts of its plumages, molt, flight, food, voice, action and disposition, both wild and in captivity, migration, mating, nidification, etc., form a valuable contribution to ornithological literature. The numerous quotations appended from the publications and manuscripts of others are of rather unequal value and trustworthiness.

In the treatment of the literature the desire to include mention of every scrap of published information regardless of its value has led to the accumulation of a mass of detailed data and titles that is bewildering in its extent and could have been reduced into well digested summaries which would have been of far more benefit to the reader. The lengthy bibliography too, gives scarcely a clue to the contents of the papers and fails to distinguish important titles from those containing mere casual mention of the subject of the monograph. A shorter list of the really valuable papers with a line or two of comment would have been of far greater service. These matters, however, in no way detract from the value of the main text.

A new race *Buteo platypterus cubanensis* from Cuba is described, but in such an obscure manner as readily to escape notice and with no designation of a type specimen. It is just such loose methods as this which have caused names to be overlooked and have led later to necessary changes in nomenclature and unfortunate complications.

A number of excellent halftones mainly from photographs by Mr. Alfred C. Redfield illustrate this valuable paper.—W. S.

Bent on Birds of the Aleutian Islands.—Mr. Arthur C. Bent accompanied by Messrs. Rollo H. Beck, Alexander Wetmore and Fred B. McKechnie spent the last three weeks of June, 1911, in a hurried survey of the islands of the Aleutian chain. Mr. Wetmore represented the Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the expedition had in mind the securing of data for Mr. Bent's continuation of the Life Histories of North American Birds to be published by the Smithsonian Institution. The party travelled, through the courtesy of the Treasury Department, on the revenue cutter 'Tahoma' and cruised the entire length of the chain, landing on Atka, Kiska, Attu, Tanaga and Adak and the western end of Unalaska. The stops were necessarily very short, as the 'Tahoma' was due at Unalaska, July 1, and exploration was limited to the immediate vicinity of the harbors.

Mr. Bent's first publication¹ dealing with the results of the trip was a description of a new race of Ptarmigan, *Lagopus rupestris sanfordi*, from Tanaga. On each one of the more remote islands a peculiar form seems to have been differentiated. This one is said to resemble *L. r. chamberlaini* and *L. r. atkensis* from Adak and Atka Islands to the eastward, but is lighter than either.

¹ A New Subspecies of Ptarmigan from the Aleutian Island. By A. C. Bent. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 56, No. 30. pp. 1-2. Jan. 6, 1912.

A second paper¹ gives a brief account of the trip, with annotated lists of sixty species found on the Aleutians and twenty-two noted in Bering Sea in July. Interesting accounts of the habits of many of the species are given and two Asiatic birds are recorded for the first time in North America—*Hypocentor rustica* the Rustic Bunting, of which two dead specimens were found and one more shot by Mr. Wetmore on Kiska Island and *Calliope calliope* the Ruby-throated Nightingale of which Mr. McKechnie shot one specimen on the same island. A specimen of *Aestrelata* nearest to *A. fisheri* was obtained at the entrance to Kiska Harbor.—W. S.

Nelson and Goldman on New Birds from Panama.—Mr. E. A. Goldman's collections while on the Smithsonian Biological Survey of Panama during the winter of 1910–11 have yielded several new species. He finds in studying the Kingfishers² which he obtained that two distinct races have heretofore been united under *Ceryle septentrionalis* Sharpe. The more northern one to which Sharpe's name is found to apply ranges the whole length of Mexico to southern Texas while the one which is here named *C. americana isthmica* ranges from Guatemala to Panama. In another paper³ Mr. E. W. Nelson describes two new forms of Nun Birds obtained by Mr. Goldman.—*Monasa fidelis* and *M. similis* each based on a single specimen.—W. S.

Mearns on New African Birds.—Dr. E. A. Mearns⁴ presents descriptions of seven new species of African Grass Warblers as a result of his study of the material obtained by the Smithsonian African Expedition. Four of these, *Cisticola subruficapilla aequatorialis*, *C. s. borea*, *C. strangei kapi-tensis*, and *C. hypoxantha reichenowi* were obtained by himself; two, *C. allenii* and *C. difficilis*, by Dr. Glover M. Allen who was collecting in British East Africa at the same time that Dr. Mearns was there, and one, *C. prinioides kilimensis* was obtained by Dr. W. L. Abbott in 1888.

In a later paper,⁵ *Helionympha raineyi* obtained on the Rainey African Expedition is described from the Telek River, Sotik District.—W. S.

¹ Notes on Birds Observed During a Brief Visit to the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea in 1911. By A. C. Bent. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 56, No. 32, pp. 1–29, Feb. 12, 1912.

² A New Kingfisher from Panama. By E. A. Goldman. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 56, No. 27, pp. 1–2, December 1, 1911.

³ Descriptions of two New Species of Nun Birds from Panama. By E. W. Nelson. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 56, No. 37, pp. 1–2. February 16, 1912.

⁴ Descriptions of Seven New African Grass-warblers of the Genus *Cisticola*. By Edgar A. Mearns. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 56, No. 25, pp. 1–6, Nov. 23, 1911.

⁵ Description of a New Species of Sun Bird, *Helionympha raineyi*, from British East Africa. By Edgar A. Mearns. Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 56, No. 28, p. 1, Nov. 28, 1911.